MR Review Essay

Vietnam: General Vo Nguyen Giap

Colonel William S. Reeder, Jr., U.S. Army, Retired, Ph.D.

The Global War on Terrorism is a 21st-century conflict, but as the United States finds itself engaged in counterinsurgency operations, it is useful to look back at past experiences to see if lessons might be gleaned to inform at least some of our actions in the months and possibly years ahead. One obvious place to turn is the Vietnam War.

There is no dearth of information written on that conflict. Indeed, there is far more information available than can reasonably be digested. Nonetheless, as Americans seek a better understanding of the experience in Vietnam, and specifically attempt to draw lessons that might apply to combating insurgents and other asymmetric foes, it is helpful to gain the perspective views of enemy combatants, key planners, and leaders on the opposing side.

Undoubtedly, the greatest military figure from modern Vietnamese history is Vo Nguyen Giap. Giap commanded Vietnamese forces that defeated the French during the First Indochina War and was the Minister of Defense during the U.S. fight in Vietnam. Giap's book, *General Vo Nguyen Giap: The General Headquarters in the Spring of Brilliant Victory* (The Gioi Publishers, Hanoi, 2002), has been translated into English and provides a ready source of information on Giap's view of the final phases of that conflict.

Giap's memoir is a mixture of historical data, personal interpretation, and regrettably, propaganda. The reader must constantly be alert to understand which is being conveyed at any given time. This is not to dismiss the work out of hand because of this deficiency. Quite the contrary. The recounting of historical events from the North Vietnamese viewpoint is insightful.

The perspectives Giap provides on the workings of North Vietnam's state, party, and military apparatus brings the reader much closer to an understanding of how this arcane and seemingly inept communist system was able to plan, organize, and prosecute a victorious war against the mightiest power on earth. However, the reader must carefully guard against the unchallenged acceptance of any portion of the narrative that intends to diminish the South Vietnamese or the Americans or to advance the political, military, or moral position of the North. Not that any of these positions could not otherwise be carried by sound argument supported by verifiable data. It is just that Giap does not do so and often puts forth erroneous data that is easy to refute.

Giap's memoirs recount the U.S. Christmas bombing campaign of 1972 that preceded the signing of the Paris Peace Accords ending U.S. involvement in the war in January 1973. He then highlights the agenda and decisions of the 21st Plenum of the North Vietnamese Communist Party Central Committee that laid down the outline for the continuance of the war, in spite of the Paris Peace Accords, to ultimate communist victory. The remainder of the book focuses on how the Plenum's decisions evolved in form and detail and how the resulting campaign was executed through the final collapse of the South Vietnamese regime.

Two chapters, "Fundamental Plan and Opportunity Plan" and "Making Strategic Decisions," are the most insightful. They show Giap as a student of history, acknowledging the influence of French Emperor Napoleon Bonaparte while quickly adding the importance of Soviet Premier Joseph Stalin and Cuban President Fidel Castro as well. Here Giap discusses the interrelationship of the party, the army, and the state in developing the strategy for the post-U.S. departure offensive that would overwhelm the South.

Giap also gives some insight, and possibly exaggerated credit, to the relationship between North Vietnamese officials and those of the remnants of the insurgency in the South. He cites lessons learned from one of the few admitted North Vietnamese failures—the 1972 Easter Offensive—and then describes a process of an evolving position of consensus between the three elements of national power as the plan moved from concept to maturity.

He points out that the offensive was envisaged to last for at least 2 years. The plan called for two stages. The first was to be in three waves launched in 1975. The waves were to sweep across South Vietnam successively moving from the southern to the northern provinces and were designed only to disrupt pacification efforts; impart some level of military and economic damage; open strategic movement corridors; and essentially set conditions for a 1976 general offensive that would begin the liberation of the South.

The North was surprised by the speed of its opening actions in 1975 and scurried to craft a revised plan while the campaign was already in rapid motion. The quickly devised branches and sequels, combined with the battlefield initiative of North Vietnamese Army commanders, thrust advances quickly across the countryside and soon threatened, then stormed, the defenses of the South Vietnamese capital—Saigon.

Giap does not try to conceal that the success of the final North Vietnamese advance to victory depended

on the U.S. departure in 1975 and on the politically crippled position of President Richard M. Nixon. He also reveals the worry that surrounded the possibility of subsequent American reintervention in response to North Vietnamese offensive moves.

There are five principal lessons that come out of Giap's memoirs. The first is the importance of understanding an insurgent adversary's history, geography, and culture. The second is to not underestimate any asymmetric enemy. The third is that the use of military force is but one component of a successful campaign strategy. The fourth is the criticality of ideology and the charismatic energy injected into that ideology. And the fifth is that the people and the governing institutions of North Vietnam were prepared to endure longer than were the people and government of the United States.

The last message comes forth throughout the text. From the outset, as Giap reflects, there was never any thought other than continuing the fight until the United States tired of its involvement in Vietnam. This important lesson—that conflicts couched in the rhetoric of peoples' wars can continue for many years and even decades—is one of the most significant from the Vietnam War and, certainly, an extremely relevant message of this book.

What Giap does not divulge, however, is the enormous strategic leverage of a controlled and astutely manipulated population. He also does not discuss the large-scale military and economic aid the Soviet Union or China provided to the North, or the eventual extinguishing of military aid from the United States to the South.

He fails to provide even an innuendo of any dissent or even modestly differing opinion within the North Vietnamese brain trust or at any level in the communist system. Not that any of these would have necessarily changed the course of the war; it simply seems that an examination of the conclusion of the conflict should consider a much broader range of influences than the narrow path Giap trod.

A few additional criticisms will better prepare any future reader for some of the intellectual challenges this memoir presents. The book contains a good deal of discussion of towns and regions that will be absolutely confusing to those not intimately familiar with Vietnam's geography and political boundaries, and the book contains no maps or organizational charts, which can befuddle a reader trying to understand the personalities and structure of the state, the party, and the military.

A final caution: be extremely wary of the data Giap offers as fact. Some of his information is indeed correct, such as the fact that a B-52 was shot down on 22 November 1972 and crashed in Thailand. Other information drifts off the mark, however, and some statements approach the absurd. Giap's claim (citing a communiqué from the Army High Command) that in one 12-day period North Vietnamese forces shot down 33 B-52s, 5 F-111s, and 24 U.S. Navy and 3 reconnaissance aircraft differs significantly from Western sources that hold losses during that same period to be 17 B-52s and a total of 11 other aircraft.

Giap further contends that eight U.S. warships were set afire at this time. No record of such incidents exists for the period. As a prisoner of war (POW) in Hanoi's prison system, I dispute Giap's contention that American prisoners of war were "allowed to make wall newspapers, organize singing festivals, welcome Santa Claus at the side of finely decorated Christmas trees, and to pray for peace and repatriation. I can personally report that none of those holiday perks were enjoyed by anyone I know.

So, this is a book of value, a work that delivers one great general's insight into the workings of a system that was able to defeat the United States of America. And, it presents details of the planning and execution of Hanoi's last and greatest campaign that have hitherto been unknown.

At the same time, however, the book is filled with pitfalls that must be negotiated by any serious reader. It is a memoir by Vietnam's most renowned modern military leader—a memoir of North Vietnam's final push to overrun South Vietnam. Not at all surprising, it is also a platform from which to chisel a timeless niche for the role of Giap in that great military victory.

Giap emerges from this work as the great mind behind the plan and the changes that were introduced during its execution. Again and again the party and the state turn to Giap for help—and he always delivers. Still, such vainglory is not unique among military autobiographies and memoirs published in the East or the West.

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Reeder is a 30-year Army veteran with two tours of duty in Vietnam, flying armed OV-1 Mohawk reconnaissance airplanes and AH-1 Cobra attack helicopters. He participated in deep reconnaissance and surveillance operations throughout Southeast Asia and was involved in special operations with the Studies and Observations Group (SOG). He has in excess of 3,000 hours of flight time including over 1,000 hours in combat. During his second combat tour, he was shot down and captured by the communist North Vietnamese, spending nearly a year as a prisoner of war (POW).

Subsequent assignments included various command and staff positions and a stint at the U.S. Air Force Academy. He commanded at all levels, platoon through brigade, including command of an AH-64 Apache attack helicopter squadron. His last assignment before retirement in 1995 was as the Deputy Chief of Staff, de facto Chief of Staff, for the U.S. Southern Command in Panama.

His military awards and decorations include the Valorous Unit Award, Defense Superior Service Medal, Legion of Merit, two Distinguished Flying Crosses, three Bronze Star Medals, three Purple Hearts for wounds received in action, the POW Medal, Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star, and numerous Air Medals (one with "V" device). In 1977 he was named Army Aviator of the Year. He was featured in the Public Broadcasting Service documentary, "The Helicopter Pilots of Vietnam" and has provided military commentary on CNN and the Discovery Channel.

Black Soldiers in Blue

Lieutenant Colonel Edwin L. Kennedy, Jr., U.S. Army, Retired

Black Soldiers in Blue: *African American Troops in the Civil War Era*, edited by John David Smith, is an eclectic compilation of stories about the outstanding black soldiers who served in the Union Army from 1861 to 1865.[1] This book addresses only black soldiers who served in the Army. It does not address the estimated 60,000 blacks who served with the Confederate Army in both combatant and support roles.[2] The book also does not produce much fresh material, and Smith sets an unmistakably biased tone typical of those who neglect the fact that blacks served on both sides during the Civil War.

As if to portend problems within the text, the dust jacket has a popular, but fake, picture of Louisiana black troops retouched to appear as Union soldiers. The picture was made from a prewar photograph taken of the 1st Louisiana Native Guards in their gray uniforms. Subsequently, the photograph was color-toned blue so the subjects appear to be Union soldiers. An American flag and other changes were also added to the original photograph.

Another photograph used in the book is purportedly a black Civil War soldier and a young woman. The photograph, however, was likely made about 20 years *after* the Civil War. Judging by the soldier's Model 1875 cap insignia, he was a member of the 25th Infantry. The five-button blouse did not even enter service until 1883. Taken as a whole, these photographs add to the plethora of incorrect information that exists about black soldiers and their Civil War service.

I question Smith's ever-increasing number of black soldiers who served in the Civil War. In one place he says there were 179,000. In another place, he says there were 180,000. His numbers are attributed to "African-American" troops; however, all "colored" troops were included in numbers cited by the U.S. Army, including Hispanics and other minorities. The ease with which he adds thousands of soldiers to the rolls raises questions of precision and accuracy.

Portraying the Union Army as openly embracing black soldiers, the book downplays or completely ignores the despicable treatment these men received in an army that was supposed to be "freeing them." Such Union generals as Ulysses S. Grant (who possessed slaves brought into the family by his wife) and William Tecumseh Sherman (who insultingly called black soldiers "Sambos") tainted the views of their subordinates and ensured racism and prejudice would be sanctioned. Black soldiers were not completely integrated into the military until 1948 when President Harry S. Truman issued Executive Order 9981.

Black soldiers were good enough to serve and die for the country—just not with whites. Even officer ranks were practically devoid of blacks because blacks were thought to be incapable of leading soldiers. The few black officers who were allowed to be commissioned into the Army were placed so they would not lead white soldiers. The emancipationists' dream was smoke and mirrors cloaked in self-righteousness to hide the Army's extreme prejudice and racism.

While the book mentions forced enlistment of blacks into military service during the Civil War, it does not broach the wide scope of the problem—the presumption that because it was the Union Army, it was not a major problem. However, official records reveal several citations of dragooning unwilling blacks into Federal service.

On 12 May 1862 from Port Royal, South Carolina, Treasury Special Agent Edward L. Pierce wrote to Secretary of Treasury Salmon P. Chase: "This has been a sad day on these islands. . . . The scenes of today . . . have been distressing. . . . Some *500 men* were hurried . . . from Ladies and Saint Helena [Islands] to Beaufort . . . , then carried to Hilton Head. . . . The Negroes were sad. . . . The superintendents . . . aided the military in the disagreeable affair, disavowing the act. Sometimes whole plantations, learning what was going on, ran off to the woods for refuge. Others, with no means of escape, submitted passively to the inevitable decree. . . . This mode of [enlistment by] violent seizure and transportation . . . , spreading dismay and fright, is repugnant.[3]

The book resolves, without a shadow of a doubt, allegations regarding the Fort Pillow controversy.[4] I find this incredible because shortly after the event a Congressional hearing was not able to place absolute blame for this unfortunate action. As experienced soldiers know, "stuff happens" in the heat of battle. That does not make it right, but it also does not prove malice aforethought.

The fact that the writer probably had no experience as a soldier inhibited his understanding of the "fog of war." The reasons accepted at the time by a hostile Republican Congress in its own investigations seem to be rationalized away in the book. If anyone was ready to condemn the Confederates, it was the radical Republican Congress. This just did not happen—even (ironically) with Sherman's support.

Facts such as the failure of the garrison to surrender, the taunting of the assaulting troops by the defenders during the truce, Union soldiers surrendering individually then taking up arms again, and the "face of battle" issues are conveniently rationalized or overlooked.

Smith handles black soldiers' ill-treatment by their Union superiors with "kid gloves." By not mentioning the full extent of the soldiers' abuse, he places shame and calumny on the Army's historical records.

Accounts of the Battery Wagner assault fail to mention the crimes the Army committed against its own men—crimes chronicled in official records and other wartime accounts. Bias and prejudice are not presumed because such accounts were written by Northerners about their own actions. Writing about the 54th Massachusetts Infantry at Battery

Wagner a former regimental officer says: "Sergeant George E. Stephens of Company B described the scene to Captain Emilio: 'Just at the very hottest moment of the struggle, a battalion or regiment charged up to the moat, halted, and did not attempt to join us, *but from their position commenced to fire upon us* [emphasis added]. I was one of the men who shouted from where I stood, "Don't fire on us. We are the Fifty-fourth." I have heard it was a Maine Regiment.'"[5]

The Battle of the Crater account shows the ineptness and racism that existed among Union commanders. However, the gross racism that existed in the rank-and-file against their own comrades is not cited.

One account reads: "George L. Kilmer, an officer of the Fourteenth New York Heavy Artillery, went into the crater with the first wave and reported afterward that when the USCT [U.S. Colored Troops] moved forward to charge the fort, some of [the] white soldiers refused to follow them. Pandemonium broke out when the black soldiers could not continue the assault and started to retreat and come back into the crater. 'Some colored men came into the crater and there they found a fate worse than death in the charge. . . . *It has been positively asserted that white men [Union] bayoneted blacks who fell back into the crater'*" [emphasis added].

At the Battle of Olustee (Ocean Pond), captured Confederate records show the disdain white soldiers demonstrated for their black comrades: "As usual with the enemy, they posted their negro regiments on their left and in front, where they were slain by hundreds, and upon retiring left their dead and wounded negroes uncared for, carrying off only the whites, which accounts for the fact that upon the first part of the battlefield nearly all the dead found were negroes."[6]

The book implies the false premise that all blacks were treated badly by Southerners and treated well by Northerners. What is lacking is a common thread that ties the social relationship of whites to blacks throughout the North and, hence, reflected in their mistreatment by the Army. The gist of this book is that despite some minor mistreatment, the Army was a willing partner in integration and equality. The truth is much different. Not until major complaints, near mutinies, and intervention by politicians were black soldiers even able to obtain equal pay, and it was years before integration.

A major factor conveniently glossed over is that black soldiers were not allowed to serve in integrated units. "Separate but equal" was no better then than it is now. Some historians seem to conveniently forget this and concentrate only on the fact that blacks were allowed to serve in the Army—as if that was compensation enough.

Base racism by Army commanders, and even by President Abraham Lincoln, demonstrates the problem was not limited to soldiers in the ranks. Black author Lerone Bennett's book, *Forced Into Glory,* chronicles Lincoln's racist views on blacks.[7]

The final integration in 1948 of loyal and brave black soldiers who did their duty despite the hardships they were subjected to is a tribute to their courage, valor, and service. Despite another 80 years of segregation after their purported "freedom," black soldiers continued to serve valiantly for the flag that "freed" them. Their service was in spite of, not because of, their shameful treatment. ***MR***

NOTES

1. John David Smith, ed.,*Black Soldiers in Blue***:** *African American Troops in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
2. For information about black confederate history, see "Black History Month: Black Confederate Heritage," on-line at <www.scv.org/documents/edpapers/blackhistory.doc>, accessed 27 January 2005.
3. The Official Records of the War of the Rebellion, Washington, D.C., 1880, ser. III, vol. II, 52-53.
4. For information about the Fort Pillow, Tennessee, controversy, see on-line at <www.civilwarhome.com/ftpillow.htm>, accessed 27 January 2005.
5. Luis F. Emilio, *A Brave Black Regiment: History of the Fifty-Fourth Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry* (MA: Boston Book Company, 1894, reprint, Salem, MA: Ayer Company Publishers, Inc., 1990), 93.
6. Federal Official Records, vol. XXV, chap. XLVII, 341, Report of the Confederate Commander, Savannah, Georgia, 27 April 1864, Battle of Ocean Pond (Olustee).
7. Lerone Bennett, *Forced Into Glory: Abraham Lincoln's White Dream* (Chicago, IL: Johnson Publishing Company, Inc., 2000).

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Campfires of Freedom

Major Jeffrey C. Alfier, U.S. Air Force

We stood like obsidian panthers
In a corner of the white world.
—Yusef Komunyakaa[1]

Monash University (Australia) history professor Keith P. Wilson outlines three broad purposes for writing *Campfires of Freedom—The Camp Life of Black Soldiers during the Civil War.*[2] Those purposes are: "To describe the soldiers' lives . . . , bring into focus the emotional texture of military life, [and] analyze the process of cultural change that occurred within the army camps."

Why camp life? As Wilson states, camp life helped the African-American—"divided from the mainstream of American cultural life—bridge this divide, and negotiate the changes necessary to meet the demands of army life . . . ; reconfigure race relations . . . ; give black people a new definition; [and] challenge existing notions of race and relationship." In exploring these issues, Wilson achieves his purposes quite well.

African-Americans—both freemen and ex-slaves—enlisted for a variety of reasons, from patriotism to sheer poverty. Like many of their white counterparts, black soldiers attributed theological significance to the war. For those relegated to lower social classes, military service has always been a medium for social advancement, and this is how Northern black leaders envisaged such service for the black soldier.

Wilson shows that like American society at large, the African-American, although ignored or marginalized by Northern and Southern societies, grew and progressed amid the atmosphere of impending secession and subsequent war. So circumstanced, the camps evolved.

The camp varied in physical environment; leadership styles of officers

and noncommissioned officers; quality of training received; and the effects of combat experiences. Each camp had chaplains, cooks, camp followers, singers, and verse writers. Ironically, the universal pastimes of gambling and drinking belied the racial barriers preventing African-Americans from joining white regiments.

Like all soldiers, the black soldier built "social bonds and friendship networks with the comrades with whom [they] shared a tent." Still, they resented stereotyping attitudes that sought to relegate them to nothing more than waiters and servants (or to fatigue duty).

Although, they formed veterans' societies after the war, most were glad to be rid of camp life. Yet, Wilson does not put the black soldier on some glorious pedestal. He notes, for instance, that like their white counterparts, some black soldiers exploited women, often as tools of revenge.

Many of the white officers who commanded all-black units joined out of patriotism. Some were abolitionist visionaries; others seemed interested only in self-promotion. Most had genuine concern for the welfare of their men, fighting for pay equality and postwar resettlement on agrarian bases. By stressing patriotism and enforcing discipline, officers and noncommissioned officers alike were able to reassure their soldiers of the particular dignity of fighting for the Union.

Still, some officers seemed only interested in their own welfare while many felt true education was beneath the black soldier's ability. (Wilson devotes an entire chapter to the black soldiers' struggle for literacy.) Some officers were even base enough to steal from their soldiers. As Wilson says, "The soldiers and officers traveled to the same destination, but they did so on different paths."

To say Wilson's work is well researched is an understatement: the book contains 85 pages of worthwhile notes, adding to the growing scholarship of studies about the African-American soldiers' experience in a formative period of American history. As such, the book is a fitting companion to Ira Berlin's *Freedom's Soldiers: The Black Military Experience in the Civil War,* and John David Smith's *Black Soldiers in Blue: African American Troops in the Civil War Era*.[3] Wilson does not explore black troops' experiences in combat; other studies cover that issue: for example, Noah Andre Trudeau's encyclopedic *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865*.[4]

Wilson realized his work was "less a research project than a journey through history." For determined students and scholars, this thoroughly researched exemplar of historiography is well worth the price.***MR***

NOTES

1. Yusef Komunyakaa, "Between Angels & Monsters," *Magic City* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press/ University Press of New England, 1992), 48.
2. Keith P. Wilson, *Campfires of Freedom—The Camp Life of Black Soldiers during the Civil War* (Ohio: Kent State University Press, 2002).
3. Ira Berlin, *Freedom's Soldiers: The Black Military Experience in the Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998); John David Smith, *Black Soldiers in Blue: African American Troops in the Civil War Era* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002).
4. Noah Andre Trudeau, *Like Men of War: Black Troops in the Civil War, 1862-1865* (New York: Back Bay Books, 1999).

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MR Book Reviews

THEODORE ROOSEVELT JR.: The Life of a War Hero, H. Paul Jeffers, Presidio Press, 2002, Novato, CA, 270 pages, $27.95.

There is no question President Theodore Roosevelt was a visionary in many aspects; truly a man ahead of his time. The diversity of his interests is rivaled only by his achievements. He was a Spanish-American War hero, a Medal of Honor recipient, Undersecretary of the Navy, an environmentalist, a driving force in the creation of the Panama Canal, President of the United States, and the list goes on. A man of his stature and unique nature casts a large shadow; some would aptly describe his as an impossible act to follow. But what if you were the son of such a man, more, the namesake? This was the life and difficult reality of Theodore (known as Ted) Roosevelt, Jr., who had no choice but to grow up in the shadow of a larger-than-life father. Yet, he became his own man and contributed to this country in a truly singular, remarkable way—a man with his own achievements, different from the father, but nonetheless important. Ted lived a remarkable life that has not often been chronicled. H. Paul Jeffers' book, *Theodore Roosevelt Jr.: The Life of a War Hero,* offers a contemporary look at the life of this important American.

Born in 1887, Ted was the eldest son in the rowdy, interesting Roosevelt clan. The book opens with Ted's arrival but quickly returns to his father's life, to lay down a background necessary to understanding the environment that influenced Ted's early life—an environment not short of structure or influence. By the time Ted was in his early teens his father had already been the governor of New York, a Spanish-American War hero, and president of the United States. To be ordinary was not in the Roosevelt genes. This fact was omnipresent in the Roosevelt home where normal house-guests shaped national and world events.

Ted had no choice but to achieve and live life to a higher order. Like his father, he had to overcome many challenges. He was neither a gifted student nor an athlete, but he possessed his family's spirit, overcoming any shortcomings that existed. His father was always present to lend a steady and sensitive hand. Even when Ted was in boarding school his busy president father found time to push and encourage him. President Roosevelt's letters show his sensitive

understanding, wisdom, and careful words to his son.

World War I profoundly affected the Roosevelt family. After Jeffers' adept analysis of the Roosevelt psyche, it is not surprising to read of the four Roosevelt siblings who served their country during the thick of the fight. Ted and his three brothers served directly in combat. Ted and his brother Archie were wounded, and Quentin, an air corps pilot, was killed. Ted rose to the rank of colonel at the war's end serving as the 26th Infantry Regiment Commander. Ted's wife, Eleanor, also served overseas with the YMCA, supporting the wounded. They genuinely performed this service, not because of some sort of expected future political career but, rather, because of example.

Ted succeeded as well as failed in some of the same ways as his father did. Jeffers insightfully covers political tides in New York after the war, specifically the rise of Ted's cousin Franklin and Ted's ill-fated run for the governorship of New York. He also covers Ted's founding of the American Legion and his successful service as the Governor to Puerto Rico and later the Philippines.

When World War II appeared inevitable, Ted volunteered for service again, despite being in his middle 50s and in poor health. He became the Assistant Division Commander for the 4th Infantry Division on D-Day, going ashore in the first wave at Utah Beach, over objections from his superiors. He was the only general officer to do so. For his inspiring actions he was recommended for the Medal of Honor. Sadly, he died of a heart attack less than 2 weeks later.

Jeffers' ability to write this book is in no small part due to the research he devoted to previous works about President Roosevelt that laid the necessary background and setting to fully understand the larger Roosevelt family, their zest for life and achievement, and their strong desire to serve the public. Ted's life story and service to this country warrant telling, and Jeffers tells it well. This book would serve well in historical researches of the Roosevelt family, events of the early decades of the 20th century, and in particular, this man's remarkable life.

LTC Ted Behncke, Sr., USA
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

EAGLES & BULLDOGS IN NORMANDY 1944: The American 29th Division from Omaha to St Lo, the British 3rd Infantry Division from Sword Beach to Caen, Michael Reynolds, Casemate, Havertown, PA, 2003, 230 pages, $32.95.

With the publication of Eagles and Bulldogs, historian Michael Reynolds has once again authored a well-written, thoroughly researched history of World War II. Unlike his previous three books, which dealt with the history of the I and II SS Panzer Corps during the final years of World War II, and another work, which dealt with Jochen Peiper, this book focuses on Allied forces and describes the exploits of the American 29th Infantry Division (from Omaha Beach to St. Lo) and the British 3d Division (from Sword Beach to Caen). Caen and St. Lo were road hubs captured to secure and expand the beachhead for the drive to Germany.

Reynolds allows the reader to compare and contrast how each division was trained and led, the tactics they used, their leaders' command styles, and how they achieved their missions. He states up front this was not an easy book to write. He "was often dismayed and depressed by what he discovered [because] the closer one [got] to the men, the more conscious one [became] of the human cost and the inadequacies of some leaders." After reading the book, many will agree with Reynolds' assessment.

The book has several unique, appealing qualities. Reynolds includes the German Army and French civilian perspectives in the narrative, allowing the reader to compare Allied plans to the German version of events and to understand how decisions affected the populations of Caen and St. Lo. In addition, the maps accompanying the text allow the reader to visualize the narrative. The one drawback is they are in black and white, which makes it difficult to determine elevation differences.

Reynolds provides balanced views about German opposition and the controversial decisions each division made. He does not shy from placing blame where his analysis leads him, and he does not hesitate to reinterpret facts and events presented in previous histories. In fact, some of his severest criticism is about the British Army's failure to train its senior officers in combined arms warfare.

Reynolds's analysis of division and brigade leaders is enlightening, especially when he examines leadership errors that resulted in the initial attack toward Caen by one depleted infantry battalion and some tanks. Descriptions of the lack of urgency, misreading the higher commander's intent, and delays and missed opportunities are sure to give the reader cause to question some commanders' decisions and provide areas for reflection, especially concerning the relief of commanders.

Readers are sure to enjoy this splendid, well-researched book about two divisions, and will want to have it as a part of their libraries. Even with the numerous histories of the Normandy Campaign available today, this book stands out.

LTC Robert J. Rielly, USA, Retired,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

JEFFERSON'S WAR: America's First War on Terror 1801-1805, Joseph Whelan, Carroll & Graf, Publishers, New York, 2003, $15.00.

When, and against whom, did the United States fight its first war, and who was president at the time? I suspect many well-educated adults would readily respond, "the War of 1812 when James Madison was president." They would be wrong. In fact, the first war the United States fought occurred in 1801, the first year of Thomas Jefferson's presidency, when the Nation had existed barely 25 years.

A few modern historians have tried to portray Jefferson as sort of a hippie, born 200 years before his time, peace-loving, and impractical. Nothing could be further from the truth. Jefferson was a tough, hard-boiled president who did not scruple to use either intrigue or brute force if he felt the national interest required it. But, what was this war in 1801? Who was the enemy? The answer is the same as today—rogue Muslims.

In 1800, the Mediterranean coast of North Africa was occupied by Islamic states—Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli, Egypt—that were quasi-independent but, formally, part of the Turkish Empire, which was centered in Istanbul (Constantinople). The various

beys and pashas who ruled these states paid substantial sums annually to the Sultan. If they did not, they were removed, frequently by strangulation.

None of the regions produced much on their own, so the Muslim potentates readily turned to piracy in the Mediterranean as a source of income, but with a new twist; any nation could buy immunity for its ships. The price was stiff, but it was cheaper than losing the ships outright. The practice was also humane. Usually, captured Christian sailors were either sold into slavery in North Africa or allowed to rot in the pashas' dungeons on a starvation diet. After all, they were infidels, and Allah would not have wanted his faithful servants wasting perfectly good provisions on them.

Every state in Europe with commercial interests in the Mediterranean had knuckled under to the extortion. Even England, which considered itself "mistress of the seas" paid bribes, as did Denmark, France, Holland, the Papal States, Spain, and all the rest. The payments were high. The pashas exacted whatever the traffic would bear, but the European nations, figuring war would be even more costly, paid up. (The World War II generation called this "appeasement.")

And then a new nation, the United States of America, came on the scene, so the corsairs snapped up a few American ships, threw a bunch of their sailors into their dungeons, and awaited the customary negotiations to set the amount of the tribute. What happened afterward is the subject of Joseph Wheelan's "Jefferson's War," a splendid and exciting account of the American response that amazed the Europeans, stunned the Muslim gangsters, got the U.S. Navy off to a splendid start, created the U.S. Marine Corps, and put the "Shores of Tripoli" in the Marine hymn. It also created a surprisingly sophisticated system of combined operations.

Every U.S. officer should read this book. Not only is it a well-written thriller, it also provides a fascinating perspective on the Global War on Terrorism—the cowardly Europeans who would rather pay than fight; the almost unbelievably cruel and greedy Muslim authorities; the primitive dependence of Islamic societies on Western technology; and the remarkable adaptability of America's young men to unusual circumstances and unique challenges—all are relevant to our times. This true story has something significant to tell us all.

James B. Patrick,
Staunton, Virginia

A FACE LIKE A CHICKEN'S BACKSIDE: An Unconventional Soldier in Malaya and Borneo, 1948-1971, J.P. Cross, Cultured Lotus, Singapore, 2003, 238 pages, $20.95.

John Phillip Cross was, in his own words, an unconventional soldier. He did not do anything new or extraordinary, but he did things when others sat back in secure, comfortable positions. Engaging the British Empire's enemies required someone like Cross who was willing to forego the comforts of headquarters for the unpleasant boondocks—more often than not with Gurkhas.

Cross's story is about his command of the Gurkhas during the "Emergency"—the battle with Malaysian communist terrorists from 1948 until the terrorists became a negligible factor in Malaysian life. When Sukarno, the first president of Indonesia threatened Malaysia and Malaysia resisted, Cross wore several hats in the Eastern Malaysian areas of Sabah and Sarawak and, in the early days, Brunei as well. Cross was a commissioned officer in the British Army and a commissioned police officer in the Sarawak and Sabah police forces. He commanded the first Gurkha unit that trained as parachutists for jungle engagements, commanded the jungle warfare school in Malaysia, and spent more time in the field and with his men than in the clubs or bases.

Cross relates an incident about Malaysian and Indonesian forces that served together under the UN in the Congo in 1960. When they found themselves looking across the Borneo real estate at each other, they patrolled wearing large colorful feathers in their caps, which indicated their reluctance to engage in a firefight. Both sides called a truce along the Sarawak border unbeknownst to anyone in command. When Cross came in from the bush, he annoyed senior officers by telling them matters were not what they wanted them to be.

Cross worked on converting a Gurkha unit to the Gurkha Paratroop Battalion. The idea was to seize an opening in the jungle and insert a unit to convert the opening to an airstrip. Cross later commanded the Jungle Warfare School, but the rank he expected at retirement was not forthcoming. The lesson for Cross was simple: be careful whose toes you step on; vengeance will come later. One thing that we can say about Cross is he can hold his head high and proclaim, "I did it my way!"

Peter Charles Unsinger,
San Jose, California

THE FIGHTING FIRST: The Untold Story of the Big Red One on D-Day, Flint Whitlock, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 2004, 378 pages, $30.00.

Author Flint Whitlock contends that the 1st Infantry Division's role in the Normandy invasion has been overlooked, exploited, or distorted. His intent in writing *The Fighting First: The Untold Story of the Big Red One on D-Day* was to give the division's veterans credit. According to Whitlock, this is the first time the division's members have told their stories. Anyone wanting to explore wider issues about Operation Overlord should look elsewhere.

Whitlock asks his readers to picture themselves as young GIs. He vividly describes the physical environment and emotional stress the soldiers' felt as they approached the Normandy coast. Whitlock's ability to place the reader in the middle of the action and to describe the soldiers' emotions makes this a gripping tale of courage, perseverance, and tragedy.

He traces the division's journey from Sicily to England where it prepared for the Normandy invasion. Because of previous combat experience, the division prepared and trained from a different perspective, integrating replacements into veteran units then coaching them in survival skills. Readers will find the description of the division's life after arriving in England interesting. Whitlock

also details Major General Terry Allen's relief from duty and Major General Clarence Huebner's assumption of command.

The 1st Infantry Division's selection to spearhead the assault posed a dilemma for its commanders. Should green, untried troops be thrown into battle in hopes their eagerness for battle and youthful sense of invulnerability would carry the day, or should war-weary veteran divisions be thrown once more into the breach in hope their experience would be the telling factor? The decision and rationale behind it are relevant today.

Whitlock made extensive use of memoirs and letters, weaving them into a narrative that balances personal stories with the operation's immense scope. He describes the assault's confusion, devastation, tragedy, and the soldiers' courage in the honest detail found in participants' accounts. One of the more prophetic quotes comes from a platoon sergeant in the 16th Regimental Combat Team: "You can manufacture weapons, and you can purchase ammunition, but you can't buy valor, and you can't pull heroes off an assembly line." Truer words were never written. Whitlock shows how the movement away from the beach resulted from individual bravery and courage of many, sometimes nameless, individuals. Many books describe D-Day, but few so vividly recount the physical and emotional exhaustion that affected the troops as they pushed their way forward to expand the beachhead.

Whitlock follows the division through France, Aachen, the Hurtgen Forest, the Ardennes, and Germany. The book's last two chapters, which read more like a chronology, describe events most readers will find familiar, but these chapters lack the depth of personal description that make the earlier chapters so appealing. At this point, I no longer felt I was in the environment with the participants. Why Whitlock deviated from his original premise and intent is not clear. Perhaps he wanted to document the division's record, its Medal of Honor recipients, and what happened to them after the invasion. Despite this shortcoming, I recommend this book for the personal accounts of battle. The book underscores the importance of good training, leadership, and initiative.

LTC Robert J. Rielly,
USA, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

THE COAST GUARD IN WORLD WAR I: An Untold Story, Alex R. Larzelere, Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, MD, 2003, 240 pages, $32.95.

The role of the U.S. Coast Guard in World War I has faded from memory because most people alive today were born after the war concluded. *The Coast Guard in World War I: An Untold Story* solves the information deficit by detailing the significant service the Coast Guard gave to the war effort. One of the many amazing facts is that the Coast Guard suffered the highest percentage of casualties of any of the U.S. services during World War I.

The book contains riveting accounts of incidents and actions from first-person reports. Among these are explosions in a burning ammunition factory in New Jersey during which the Coast Guard's heroic efforts saved hundreds (probably thousands) of civilian lives. After that disaster, a Coast Guard officer was appointed captain of the port of New York. Under his direction, no munitions incident of any kind occurred during the remainder of the war.

Author Alex R. Larzelere also describes the German submarine attack at Cape Cod and antisubmarine operations off the East Coast and overseas. While under Coast Guard escort, no U.S. troop ship en route to France was successfully attacked by German submarines. Lazelere points out that Coast Guard vessels performed escort services and many of their officers and crew held principal positions aboard U.S. Navy ships. The skills they displayed during such cross-service assignments were among the many factors that led high-ranking navy officers and administration officials to attempt to merge the Coast Guard into the Navy at war's end. Larzelere explains why this would have been a career bonanza for Coast Guard officers and a personal disaster for its enlisted personnel that would have resulted in the decimation of the Coast Guard's traditional capabilities.

On balance, this book is a mix between a reference book and nonfiction designed to familiarize the reader with the Coast Guard's support of U.S. military efforts. The book contains thorough, well-constructed factual accounts; superb notes and bibliography; appropriate illustrations; and an excellent index. I recommend it to anyone interested in the Coast Guard and World War I.

LTC Douglass P. Bacon, USA,
Retired, Niceville, Florida

POETS AGAINST THE WAR, Sam Hamill and Sally Anderson, eds., Thunder's Mouth Press/Nation Books, New York, 2003, 263 pages, $12.95.

You might not be interested in war, but war is interested in you.
—Leon Trotsky

After enjoying Sam Hamill's excellent introduction to this volume of protest poetry, my impression was that many contributors wrote simply out of an urgent need to say something—anything. What emerges reads like rough drafts rather than final cuts, which is disappointing considering the outstanding lineup of poets Hamill assembled.

Often poetry arising from national or international exigencies is written too quickly. Antiwar movements deserve articulation but should not produce a literature of rambling and inartistic polemics about the self-evident undergirded by languid endings and unimaginative titles. Poets need the tempering discipline of imagistic or symbolist and rhythmic or stylistic austerity. Too much is obvious in these poems, and the more obvious or universal a particular subject is, such as war, the more effort must be put into the artistry of the telling.

Compare, for instance, *Poets Against the War* to the protest poetry of John Bradley's *Atomic Ghost: Poets Respond to the Nuclear Age* (Coffee House Press, Minneapolis, MN, 1995) or W.D. Ehrhart's *Carrying the Darkness: The Poetry of the Vietnam War* (Texas Tech University Press, Lubbock, TX, 1989). Ironically, Todd Swift's, *100 Poets Against the War* (Salt Publishing, United King-

dom, 2003)—forerunner of *Poets Against the War*—contains much more substantive and memorable verse.

Still, all is not lost. Hamill's book does contain some worthy poetry. Salam al-Asadi's "The Clay's Memory" is a magnificently powerful witness to war, while Eric Pankey's "History," Marvin Bell's "A Lesson from the Corps," Lucille Clifton's "Stones and Bones," and Holly Thomas's "Chiapas" are other excellent poems. Several poems, such as Jim Pearson's "Kunishi Ridge 2d Bn. First Marines" and John Balaban's "Collateral Damage" transcend the war in Iraq.

MAJ Jeffrey C. Alfier, USAF,
Ramstein AB, Germany

BATTLE: A History of Combat and Culture from Ancient Greece to Modern America, John A. Lynn, Westview Press, Boulder, CO, 2003, 352 pages, $27.50.

In the preface to his new book, John A. Lynn writes, "This volume has come to bury the universal soldier, not to praise him." There can be no universal soldier, Lynn says, no archetypal military, no globally consistent method of warfare, because every soldier, army, and form of warfare is a reflection of the unique culture from which it is drawn. In Lynn's view, culture is an essential tool for appreciating the diversity within warfare over the ages. In particular, a cultural analysis of war helps us study the chasm between the way societies think about war (in Lynn's words, "the discourse of war") and the way they actually conduct war (war's reality).

Lynn's approach, which is anecdotal rather than comprehensive, focuses on periods and locales where research best indicates culture's effect on warfare. Starting with ancient Greece, he moves to ancient China and India, considers medieval Europe, then moves on to the armies of the Enlightenment and the sepoys of India. After considering the Napoleonic period and the Pacific War of 1941-1945, he concludes by investigating how the Egyptian army adapted an operational plan to its military culture to gain a brief but important victory over the Israelis in 1973.

Lynn acknowledges the help of many of military history's most noted figures. Yet, one is not surprised to find Lynn most persuasive when dealing with the areas he knows best. With books like *Bayonets of Republic: Motivation and Tactics in the Army of Revolutionary France, 1791-94* (University of Illinois Press, Champaign, 1984) and *The Giant of the Grand Siecle: The French Army, 1610-1715* (Cambridge University Press, New York, 1997), Lynn has earned a reputation as a first-rate historian of the early modern and Napoleonic periods in Western Europe, and the chapters on European warfare are the strongest in the book. The chapter on medieval warfare is especially persuasive in demonstrating the contrast between the nobility's chivalric concept of war with the pillage, rape, and destruction that accompanied the campaigns of the Hundred Years War.

Inevitably, Lynn's approach will draw comparisons with that of Victor Davis Hanson, who has generated a storm of praise and opprobrium for his argument that Western culture, since the time of the Greek hoplite, has developed a consistent style of warfare based on "civic militarism," free inquiry, and "heavy infantry that fights face-to-face." This pattern of warmaking has made Western warfare uniquely lethal and, in the long term, unbeatable. More than economic or political dynamism, Hanson believes, the Western style of war has led to the dominance of Western civilization.

In the first chapter of the book, Lynn attacks Hanson's thesis head-on. Where Hanson finds consistency, Lynn sees diversity. There has been no consistent pattern of Western warfare, he says, and as Western culture has changed so have its methods of waging war. For example, Lynn finds that the civic militarism and emphasis on heavy infantry of classical Greece did not reappear together until the citizen-armies of revolutionary France. Lynn rightly observes that no argument for Western consistency can explain this interval of two-thousand years. Lynne also notes that Hanson's suggestion that the "oriental" style of war features raiding, evasion, and deception overlooks the fact that these features are frequently seen in the West as well. The most successful conquerors in history did not come from the West but, rather, from Central Asia, in the form of the Mongols and Turks.

But challenging Hanson is only a part of the task Lynn sets for himself. Throughout the book, his review of the effects of cultural influences on warfare leads him to challenge accepted beliefs. For example, he argues that the stylized, linear warfare of the 18th century was as much a response to Enlightenment thought as to the limitations of the smoothbore musket. He disputes the view that Carl von Clausewitz was able to consider war outside the framework of his own time. Echoing Azar Gat, Lynn says Clausewitz's concepts of chance and passion in warfare were products of a military romanticism unique to the early 19th century. Lynn argues against the view that race differences dominated the fighting between the United States and Japan during World War II. The causes and the strategy of the war and the decision to use the atomic bomb were driven by other factors. If the U.S. "experience" of fighting the Japanese was so different, Lynn believes, it was more because of cultural than racial differences.

Lynn offers a practical application of his cultural approach by examining the current war on terrorism. Where Hanson believes Western values will give us the upper hand in the ongoing war against Islamic extremism, Lynn is not so optimistic. Unless we incorporate terrorism into our conception of war, we run the risk of losing the restraints we have placed on war since World War II. And, Lynn believes, over the long haul, we must see terrorism as something to be "managed" in the Cold War sense rather than exterminated.

Lynn gives the reader much to chew on, and like Hanson, Lynn risks leaving his comfortable niche in a relatively narrow segment of history to develop a thesis that addresses the millennia. In doing so, he has written a provocative but readable book.

LTC Scott Stephenson, USA,
Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

AIR SUPPORT FOR PATTON'S THIRD ARMY, John J. Sullivan, McFarland and Co., Jefferson, NC, 2003, 186 pages, $42.50.

In *Air Support for Patton's Third Army*, John J. Sullivan seeks to complete the record on the Third Army. He argues that while the Third Army's success is celebrated, it is generally celebrated incompletely. No one "paid much attention to a crucial reason for the Third Army's victories—the air support given to it by the U.S. Army Air Forces, especially the Ninth Air Force." While Sullivan corrects the record, he focuses, rightly, on how the Ninth Air Force and the XIX Tactical Air Command, in particular, provided that support.

Sullivan's narrative has a nearly first-person quality because of his experience as a tactical air controller who served with the Marines in World War II and with the Army's 2d Infantry Division during the Korean war. "Nearly" is the right word, for Sullivan stays safely out of the narrative. Seeking to learn for himself how the air-ground team came together between the Ninth Air Force and the Third Army, he illuminates the process for the rest of us.

Sullivan effectively describes the critical issues from command and control of air operations, to the logistics of building tactical airfields, to keeping pace with ground operations. He examines doctrine, techniques, and tactics tactical air forces used to ensure the success of ground operations. Sullivan achieves all this with integrity. He is interested in telling the story, not in developing or sustaining a particular thesis beyond, as he points out in his preface, completing the record. He succeeds admirably.

Sullivan is also successful in describing the give and take that occurred in the Allied High Command. Lieutenant General Carl Spaatz, who preferred strategic bombing to close air support, bitterly resented the air operations command and control structure that placed the Ninth Air Force in the Allied chain of command. Technically, the Ninth Air Force reported to Air Chief Marshal Trafford Leigh Mallory; however, the chain of command was far more complicated.

Mallory, who had an unattractive personality, fended off assaults on his control from Supreme Headquarters Allied Expeditionary Force (SHAEF) and the Americans. The SHAEF staff preferred Air Chief Marshal Arthur Tedder to Mallory. The Americans, Spaatz in particular, wanted to retain control of all air operations within a national chain of command. General Dwight D. Eisenhower, the consummate coalition commander, somehow kept the peace. In the end, despite personal differences, leaders produced decisive results because of the quality of their leadership skills.

Led brilliantly by Lieutenant General Hoyt Vanderberg, the Ninth Air Force excelled despite bickering at the top tier. Vanderberg was supported by an able cast of subordinates, including Major General Pete Quesada at IX Tactical Air Command and Brigadier General Otto Weyland, whose XIX Tactical Air Command generally supported the Third Army. The Ninth Air Force also included IX Troop Carrier Command and IX Bomber Command and three supporting commands, including the large, capable IX Engineer Command. Ninth Air Force could support airborne operations, tactical bombing, and close air support, build bases, support aircraft maintenance and refueling, and defend the bases they built or occupied.

Close air support is not something the World War II air force embraced with enthusiasm. Sullivan makes it clear that the Army Air Forces had a preference for strategic bombing, which is not surprising. But, under the prodding of General Henry "Hap" Arnold and because of outstanding leadership in the Ninth Air Force, Arnold's troops developed procedures and tactics that enabled them to play a central role in achieving success in the field.

The Ninth Air Force provided aerial resupply, troop transport, interdiction, and close support. General George S. Patton's confidence in the Ninth Air Force was so high he relied on supporting airmen to secure his southern flank as the Third Army raced east in the summer of 1944. The troops on the ground trusted and depended on their colleagues in the air. Sullivan makes it clear the ground troops' trust in the Ninth stemmed from experience and the willingness of airmen and ground troops to find solutions to daunting problems and to go beyond the service's culture. Sullivan delivers a concise, compelling narrative of that effort.

COL Gregory Fontenot, USA,
Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

THE FACE OF NAVAL BATTLE: The Human Experience of Modern War at Sea, John Reeve and David Stevens, eds., Allen & Unwin, Sydney, Australia, 2003, 384 pages, $24.95.

Editors John Reeve and David Stevens wrestle with the anatomy of naval battles and operational command from the Australian Navy perspective. Using historical examples to illustrate and discuss their findings, they concentrate on three major aspects of naval warfare: surface, air, and submarine. The contributors discuss each aspect of naval warfare from 1900 to the present in detail, reflecting on personal and historical examples, including the Sino-Japanese War from 1894-1895; German Vice Admiral Graf Maximilian von Spee's cruiser squadron in World War I; the German HMAS *Sydney*-SMS *Emden's* confrontations in 1914; the use of naval air against the Italians in November 1940; and U.S. submarine warfare during World War II.

However, the book's real focus is on the human dimension—sailors and commanders—not the naval historical perspective. *The Face of Naval Battle* is quite readable, historically accurate, and observes the past century's great conflicts through the eyes of a lesser-known naval power. I highly recommend the book.

CH (LTC) Thomas C. Condry, USA,
Fort Gillem, Georgia

SECRET COMMANDOS: Behind Enemy Lines with the Elite Warriors of SOG, John L. Plaster, Simon & Schuster, New York, 2004, 384 pages, $26.00.

The U.S. Army's Studies and Observations Group (SOG) had one of the most interesting missions of the Vietnam War. During covert and clas-

sified operations, small reconnaissance teams gathered intelligence and interdicted enemy activity on the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos and Cambodia.

Often-published author John L. Plaster details his personal experiences from basic training to Special Forces training, to being a reconnaissance team member and leader, to SOG missions, to being a Covey Rider, to rotation back to America. Plaster allows the reader to experience what it feels like to fly into a Laos or Cambodia landing zone while praying it is not a trap. He takes us with him to "run recon" for days at a time with other Americans and Yards (Montagnards), Chinese Nungs, or Vietnamese, all while trying to gather critical intelligence on the North Vietnamese Army and not get discovered. The story of the SOG's extraordinary contributions is long overdue.

Plaster's close attention to detail is evident as he describes special operations. One example is Plaster's use of white phosphorus (WP) grenades, which were more effective in thick jungle vegetation than were colored smoke grenades because WP grenades eliminated drift and were easier to spot by forward air controllers directing air strikes near the reconnaissance teams. Although such lessons were learned the hard way, they saved lives.

Plaster also relates how he mentally prepared to return from Vietnam to the United States. He easily expresses the mental agony, guilt, and turmoil he felt when he had to leave Vietnam. When asked to stay for another tour he readily agreed because of his connection to the men and the importance of their mission.

Secret Commandos is an excellent companion to Medal of Honor recipient Franklin D. Miller's *Reflections of a Warrior* (Presidio Press, Novato, CA, 1991), although *Secret Commandos* offers a slightly broader perspective. Easy to read, as well as being informative and interesting, the book is difficult to put down once you begin reading. With the current world situation and the increasing dependence on special operations forces, the lessons and experiences of SOG and its operators take on new importance. This book is a valuable addition to the subject.

Scott R. DiMarco, Herkimer County Community College, New York

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BAYONETS IN THE WILDERNESS: Anthony Wayne's Legion in the Old Northwest, Alan D. Gaff, University of Oklahoma Press, Norman, 2004, 419 pages, $39.95.

Given our country's current superpower status, it is sometimes hard for us to grasp that the United States was once a floundering peripheral nation hobbled by political, military, and economic impotence. In *Bayonets in the Wilderness: Anthony Wayne's Legion in the Old Northwest,* Alan Gaff explores how the nascent nation overcame a series of military disasters to destroy a confederation of Native American tribes (mostly Shawnee, Delaware, Miami, and Wyandot) bent on halting U.S. westward expansion into the Old Northwest (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Michigan).

Gaff credits Major General Anthony Wayne with having the leadership ability, intelligence, and iron will to build a trained, disciplined army capable of fighting and winning a war against a growing Indian confederacy. In the wake of Brigadier General Josiah Harmar and Major General Arthur St. Clair's humiliating defeats at the hands of the Indian confederacy in 1790 and 1791, Wayne surmounted conflicting directives from the U.S. War Department; machinations of his subordinate, Brigadier General James Wilkinson; and a host of recruiting and logistical problems to raise his "Legion of the United States" and lead it to victory at Fallen Timbers in August 1794.

Examining the events that led to the Battle of Fallen Timbers, Gaff provides an excellent profile of the social makeup and conditions of day-to-day life in the Legion. Despite Wayne's efforts to instill discipline and professionalism, the Legion continued to be plagued with desertions and lapses in leadership. Many of Wayne's officers seemed more concerned with factional infighting, drinking, and dueling than with leading their soldiers or fighting the Native Americans. Given these challenges, Gaff is correct in lauding Wayne's ability to keep the fractious Legion together and weld it into a formidable fighting force.

Gaff has done a commendable job of recovering this important, yet largely forgotten, period of American military history, but *Bayonets in the Wilderness* does have some minor problems. Clearly Gaff thoroughly researched his subject and made extensive use of pension, service, courts martial, and orderly book records to reconstruct the Legion's social characteristics, but at times he digresses into overly detailed biographies of the Legion's relatively minor actors. Despite this shortcoming, the book is a solid work for those interested in the origins of the U.S. Army.

LTC Richard S. Faulkner, USA, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

GENERAL IKE: A Personal Reminiscence, John S.D. Eisenhower, Free Press, New York, 2003, 267 pages, $16.00.

General Ike: A Personal Reminiscence fills a small, but significant, gap in the literature about General Dwight D. Eisenhower. But, the book is not a definitive discussion of "Ike's"

performance as the Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Forces. John S.D. Eisenhower writes a more endearing, intimate account of a man he knew as "Dad." Having for many years resisted calls to write about his father, Eisenhower was finally moved to do so because of a sense of duty and to correct a growing body of "misleading material." The result is a highly readable book about Ike's early years and military career.

Eisenhower presents his material in a thematic rather than a strict chronology format, which facilitates multiple uses and gives the book the feel of an essay collection. Each essay focuses on Ike's relationship with a specific person or group, from his days as a subordinate to Generals Fox Conner, John J. Pershing, and Douglas MacArthur, to his role as supreme commander and his interactions with Britain's Prime Minister Winston Churchill, France's President Charles De Gaulle, Britain's Field Marshal Bernard Montgomery, and his own subordinate, General George S. Patton.

Eisenhower places value in confirming or refuting certain arguments made by historians regarding the strategic and operational direction of the Allied war effort. For example, he seeks to silence critics of Ike's supposed passivity during planning for Operation Market-Garden by demonstrating that Ike approved the plan and never doubted its feasibility. To back up his beliefs, Eisenhower appeals to existing records and injects what perhaps only a son can—an educated guess of his father's frame of mind based on a lifetime of association.

Eisenhower makes similar judgments when discussing other controversial issues, such as Allied command relationships during and after the Normandy landings and Ike's treatment of General Omar Bradley during the Ardennes Offensive. Throughout the book, Eisenhower retains an air of eloquent reserve, tempering his criticism of others by freely noting Ike's faults and failures. The epilogue contains a simple yet powerful assessment of Ike's true effect on Allied fortunes of war between 1944 and 1945.

Students of history will find behind-the-scenes glimpses into fascinating and insightful personalities. Professional soldiers will identify with Ike as he worries over his career and strikes a balance between duty and family, and senior officers will benefit from Ike's example in dealing with Allied leaders and senior military commanders. Instructors at every level will find the book a useful vehicle for initiating discussions on leadership at the strategic level, the value of mentorship, and the importance of integrity. The general public will find the book a valuable reminder of the extraordinary services the military renders on a daily basis in peace and in war.

MAJ Thomas E. Hanson, USA,
Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

THE SHADOW WAR AGAINST HITLER: The Covert Operations of America's Wartime Secret Intelligence Service, Christof Mauch, Jeremiah M. Riemer, trans., Columbia University Press, New York, 2003, 333 pages, $34.50.

Christof Mauch's *The Shadow War Against Hitler: The Covert Operations of America's Wartime Secret Intelligence Service* describes the development of the Coordinator of Information (COI); its successor, the Office of Strategic Services (OSS); and their activities during World War II. Mauch asserts, "This study—thematically situated within a range of topics that spans the analysis of enemy actions, the investigation of unconventional secret intelligence methods, and postwar political planning—attempts to offer an overview of the projects, operations, and visions of the COI and OSS."

The book begins with a brief survey of relevant historiography on the topic and emphasizes the vast trove of archival material available to the historian. Approximately 90 percent of U.S. secret intelligence documents from World War II are available to researchers.

Mauch gives brief overviews of the OSS and its founder, Medal of Honor winner and successful Wall Street attorney William Donovan. He ascribes the particular character of the COI and OSS to the character of Donovan, who organized the intelligence services in his own image. Mauch comments, "The 'culture' of the secret intelligence service mirrored its director's conviction that hierarchical structures and narrow bureaucratic guidelines unnecessarily restricted the effectiveness and dynamism of the office." Mauch also examines the successes and failures of the OSS during the war, devoting an entire chapter to the actions of Allen Dulles in Bern, Switzerland.

The book is a serious academic monograph, not a popular history of wartime espionage, and it appeals more to the serious student than the reader seeking dramatic tales of dashing spies. The intelligence service portrait that emerges is one of prescient insight into America's German opponent. However, the service did not have President Franklin D. Roosevelt's ear and did not exert a decisive influence on the course of the war. Mauch asserts that Roosevelt made his most important strategic decisions without consulting Donovan or the OSS.

For serious students of America's intelligence services, *The Shadow War Against Hitler* is an excellent read. Mauch's words on prewar intelligence services ring familiar to anyone who has followed the 11 September 2001 Commission hearings and the debate over intelligence reform. He says, "There was quite obviously a cyclical character to the development of secret information-gathering services in the United States. Before and during wars, the institutions responsible for espionage and national security expanded; after a war, by contrast, funds were routinely and drastically cut back again."

Mitchell McNaylor,
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

GUNS OF THE THIRD REICH, John Walter, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2004, 256 pages, $34.95.

John Walter has done it again. As a renowned author on weapons, Walter continues his literary excellence documenting and clearly articulating the small arms weaponry of the Third Reich. The book is a chrono-

logical narrative of the Third Reich's regulation and nonregulation guns, including machineguns and submachineguns, automatic rifles, bolt-action rifles (sniper and sights), antitank rifles, handguns, and signal pistols, but it is not full of technical jargon, so it will satisfy those interested in the technical aspects of the guns as well as those interested only in the historical context.

Walter's intent is to make the narrative interesting and easy to read despite the material's technical complexity. In his inimitable story-telling style he describes how the guns of the Third Reich evolved over the years, from World War I, to the Weimar Republic (when restrictions imposed by Article 180 of the Treaty of Versailles were in place), to the massive rearmament, to the final days of World War II. Walter details specific directives, manufacturing procedures, and a discussion of the arms industry. He also includes appendices on German manufacturer letter codes, a glossary of common German terms, and a detailed description of standard ammunition. *Guns of the Third Reich* is richly illustrated with 60 photographs and sketches.

LTC Scott A. Porter, USA, Retired, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas

SAS: Secret War in South-East Asia, Peter Dickens, Stackpole Books, Mechanicsburg, PA, 2003, 304 pages, $19.95.

A British Special Air Service (SAS) patrol leader once said, "When you see something in the jungle it's through your rifle-sight." Peter Dickens's *SAS: Secret War in South-East Asia* provides the reader with a rifle-sight view of SAS operations during the 1963-1966 Borneo Campaign, fought against Indonesian incursions and a simmering communist insurgency.

The strength of this exciting and fast-paced book lies in Dickens' ability to furnish a soldier's vista of this secret jungle war through first-hand accounts. Dickens describes the hardships, stresses, and dangers reconnaissance teams and strike patrols endured in the jungle and provides a unique glimpse into the inner spirit and workings of the SAS. The book is wisely complemented with detailed maps that allow the reader to track patrol actions as they are mentioned in the text.

A less satisfactory feature of the book is the lack of a clear, concise overview of the political context in which this campaign occurred. Although Dickens mentions Indonesia's reason for promulgating the conflict, a nonexpert in Southeast Asian history might have difficulty understanding the larger political-military environment—an aspect Dickens should include in the introduction if the book is republished.

The book's strong British-English style and vocabulary might cause American readers to stumble over some sentences and paragraphs. And while several of the actors are well-known in the United Kingdom, they might leave a non-British reader wondering about their significance. A short biographical summary of each actor would be helpful.

The lessons the U.S. military can learn from this book lie in evaluating the approaches taken by the SAS in small-unit operations. The SAS placed tremendous "hearts and minds" effort into the campaign by aggressively patrolling contested regions, providing medical services to indigenous tribes, and stressing language and cultural training to integrate within border tribes. Despite the danger of ambush, the SAS willingly took risks to "show the flag" in isolated regions, using only the jungle as their "camp."

This is an enjoyable and easy book to read. I highly recommend it.

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